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Mahatma Gandhi's Thoughts & Its Present Relevance

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Economic Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi: An Overview

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Abstract:

Mahatma Gandhi, a father of India. He is very famous for his movements and satyagraha, not only in India but also all over the world. He was activist in Indian freedom fight. This research study is descriptive in nature and for that researcher has used secondary data only.

Gandhi was not a student of economics but still whatever he felt in Indian economy he had given views in his economics. Those economic thoughts are still inspirational to the Indian and other economists. In this paper researcher tried to highlight Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on industrialization, decentralization, regeneration of villages, population, food problem and trusteeship.

Keywords_ economic thoughts- industrialization, decentralization, regeneration of villages, population, food problem and trusteeship

Introduction:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi we all know him as Mahatma Gandhi, a father of nation (India). He was a great person, a person with pure soul, internal peace, spirituality and mortality. We always remember him for his great contribution of hard work, simplicity, faith in truth, non-violence, humanity and Unity. Gandhi is famous for his action and movements of Satyagraha non-cooperation movement, Dandi march, quit India movement not only in Indians but all over the world.

Different ideologies, philosophies and personages influenced on Gandhi's economic and political thoughts. The concept of egalitarianism, simplicity and asceticism, which were the corner stone of his economic ideas. Gandhi's economic thoughts are not found separately but in actual they are scattered all over his writing and speeches. His economic thoughts are come from day to day's life. Gandhi has never been student of Economics but whatever he felt the problem of Indian economy and their solutions was so clear that Gandhi's economic views are still inspirational to Indian economist as well as economist in the other parts of world. In this paper researcher has tried to overview on economic thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi.

Objectives of Study:

- 1) To study the economic thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi.

Research Methodology:

This present study is descriptive in nature and fully based on secondary data. Data has been collected from various research articles, books and various published sources to make this study more understandable and simple.

1) Industrialization-

Gandhi was against of large scale industrialization. According to him large scale production is responsible for many socio-economic problems. He believed that for the fullest

development of mind, body and character is essential. It means that he believed on human capital rather than large scale industrialization. He also thought that mill industries and the use of machineries create violence. So the worker lost all interest in his work. Mahatma Gandhi was in favor of decentralized economy. Where the worker would be his own master and chances of exploitation of worker is near to zero. His industrialization philosophy is related to Indian economy where population is high so he wanted to use those human resources for production. But Gandhi was not against the use of machineries. He wanted to say that if men use large mercenaries then thousands of people face the problem of unemployment and starvation. He wanted that, compulsory introduction of spinning in all the primary and secondary schools. On this basis researcher can say that Gandhi was trying to say that in Indian economy production process must be labour intensive and not a capital intensive.

2) Decentralization-

Gandhi was opposed to the centralized economy because, according to him foundation of every centralized economy where lead on violence. So he advocated a decentralized economy that is production should be organized at a large number of places at the small scale or it means small-small production units must be established or open in the People's homes. Gandhi said “if you multiply individual production to millions of times, would it not give you mass production on tremendous scale. But I quite understand that your mass production is a technical term for production by fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery. I have said to myself that is wrong. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the home of the Millions”. So the Gandhi was in favor of the development of Cottage and rural Industries. He said that digitalization was quickest and best device for building up the economy of India. The centralization of heavy industries would no effect on the cottage industries.

3) Regeneration of villages-

Gandhi wanted that regeneration of accent villages with prosperous agricultural, decentralization of industry and small scale Cooperative organizations and for that he wanted participation of people of all the levels.

He also said that the real India was in the villages and not in town. His Desire was that every Indian village must be converted into a self sufficient republic. Gandhi's ideal Village have some condition like, there should be fruit trees dharmashala small dispensaries clean roads & places of worship, public hall, schools and so on.

Gandhi knew that this ideal village is not easy so he mostly focused on revival of village industries.

4) Food problem-

Gandhi had seen the worst famine in his life during 1943-44, that time he tried to find out the problems of shortage of food. After his observation he had finally given some measures to solve the problem of shortage of food like 1) reduce the food consumption at minimum required level also reduce the consumption of food grains and pulses and have more vegetables, milk and fruit 2) all flower garden should be use for cultivation 3) prohibit black marketing 4) provision of irrigation facilities by government 5) export of oil seeds and oil cake must be stopped.

According to him, these measures will solve the problem of shortage of food problems in India.

5) On population-

Gandhi was against to use of contraceptives, he said that use of contraceptives abuse of the creative function. But another side he said that through brahmachary or self-control we can control birth. Which is according to him as "fallible sovereign remedy". He wanted to aware people through sex education.

6) The Trusteeship doctrine-

Gandhi was an advocate of non possession that is aparigraha. it means that if someone got huge amount of inherited wealth then this all wealth is not his own. After having some part of that wealth, all remaining part is belonging to the society or entire community. So that list of accumulated wealth must be spent on the welfare of all. So Gandhi said the rich consider themselves as the trustees. The capitalist were the trustees of the social property.

Conclusion:

Mahatma Gandhi has given some important economic thoughts actually those thoughts were very essential in that time as well as those thoughts where useful in contemporary Indian situation. As India has huge population so in industries producers must apply labour intensive technology so this will solve the problem of unemployment. Gandhi also wanted to develop the Cottage and village industries those are also important in current Indian situation because number of rural labours every year migrate to urban areas of India to find out jobs for employment so if they get employment at village level, they can produce number of things at village level so it will help to self sufficient villages. Likewise if we apply Gandhi's economics views in Indian contemporary economy then it will definitely help to improve or development of India.

There are some critics also made on Gandhi's economic thoughts those are his economic thoughts are, difficult to be put into practice as a neighbors action it is difficult to apply non-violence. Gandhi's regeneration of village scheme was also ideal that is not easy to come in reality. And some other critics are also there.

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